

Pune unit's petition may provide 'justice' to CBEC employees

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IT IS a decision that could affect over 2,000 gazetted officers of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) and over 11,000 across India in the long run.

The Supreme Court is expected to spell a decision on a contempt petition concerning what the CBEC employees have been calling 'wrong' implementation of policies of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

Contempt petition was filed by the Pune Unit of the All India Association of Central Excise Gazetted Executive Officers (AIACEGEO) as a follow-up of the fight spread over two decades.

Talking about the fight for justice, S K Patil, vice-president of the Pune Unit of AIACEGEO said: "In CBEC, the promotions from Group B to Group C have three feeder categories of Group B officers — Superintendent Central Excise, Superintendent Customs and Superintendent Appraiser. The DoPT has fixed a particular ratio for promotions of these categories to Group A officers, however,

CONTEMPT

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the mismanagement and non-implementation of DoPT guidelines as well as UPSC regulations has made damage to the inspector — promotee of the Central Excise Department. So much so that an officer joining after graduation at the lowermost officer level — 'inspector central excise' is made to retire after 35-38 years of service with only one promotion — that is Superintendent Central Excise and no promotion beyond that."

After continuous representations by the All-India body of AIACEGEO and approaching various authorities, the Pune Unit of AIACEGEO filed a writ petition in Supreme Court in January 2008.

"Being central government employees, we were directed to Central Administrative Tribunal

— who again told us to approach the Supreme Court basis a previous case," Patil said.

The petition was submitted to the Supreme Court in October 2010 and SC, on August 3, 2011 directed the government to revise and amend the recruitment rules and the promotion ratios for the three feeder categories from group B to group A promotions in CBEC.

"The CBEC in its board meeting on September 16, 2011 had decided to alter the existing ratios as per SC directives. However, the CBEC published draft Recruitment Rules in October 2011, which were notified in September 2012 after a contempt notice was directed to be issued by the Supreme Court. Since the CBEC did not move positively to implement as per the apex court's directives, the Pune petitioner unit filed a contempt petition, which, the SC, after a series of hearings has ordered to keep the matter as 'non miscellaneous' with the next date on March 12," Patil said.

The Pune Unit, with 250-300 members in its ambit had protested from February 24 to March 1 pressing for the demands by displaying black badges.